IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered). Please AMEND claims 1, 5, 6, and 10 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently amended) An exhaust gas purifying system provided with a NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst having a catalyst metal and a NO_x occluding substance, in an exhaust passage of a diesel engine, and a control unit comprising a normal control operation means, a regeneration control initiation judging means for detecting a regeneration control initiation timing for said NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst, a rich-burn control operation means for executing a rich-burn control operation for generating an exhaust gas which is in a fuel-rich state, accompanying recirculation of EGR gas, and a catalyst activation control operation means for executing a control operation for activating said catalyst metal immediately before said rich-burn control operation is performed;

wherein said catalyst activation control operation means executing a burning control operation in the vicinity of the stoichiometric air/fuel ratio in a range of 0.8 to 1.1 in terms of an excess air factor, in the condition of an EGR valve being totally closed, and at the same time, executing a multi-stage injection and an early injection in the fuel injection into cylinders and ~~an intake control of the diesel engine for~~ controlling the torque generation of the diesel engine by an intake control to reduce the torque variation during the transition from the normal control operation to the catalyst activation control operation.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The exhaust gas purifying system of claim 1,

wherein: said NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst comprises a reducer occluding substance.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously presented) The exhaust gas purifying system of claim 1,

wherein: said rich-burn control operation means recirculates EGR gas for generating an exhaust gas which is in a fuel-rich state and controls the torque ~~generated by the~~generation of the diesel engine by ~~controlling the~~an intake ~~air into the~~control of the diesel engine to reduce the

torque variation during the transition from catalyst activation control operation to the rich-burn control operation or from the rich-burn control operation to the normal control operation.

6. (Currently amended) A method of exhaust gas purification to be carried out with use of an exhaust gas purifying system with a NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst having a catalyst metal and a NO_x occluding substance, in an exhaust passage of a diesel engine, and a control unit comprising a normal control operation means, a regeneration control initiation judging means for detecting a regeneration control initiation timing for said NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst, a rich-burn control operation means for executing a control operation for generating an exhaust gas which is in a fuel-rich state, accompanying recirculation of exhaust gas, and a catalyst activation control operation means for executing a control operation for activating said catalyst metal immediately before said rich-burn operation is performed, and performing a catalyst activation control operation by said catalyst activation control operation means when it is judged by said regeneration control initiation judging means that a regeneration control for the regeneration of the NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst is to be initiated and thereafter executing a rich-burn control operation accompanying a recirculation of EGR gas by said rich-burn control operation means to thereby regenerate said NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst, wherein in the course of said catalyst activation control operation, a burning control operation in the vicinity of the stoichiometric air/fuel ratio in the range of 0.8 to 1.1 in terms of an excess fuel factor is performed in the condition of the EGR valve being totally closed, and at the same time, a multi-stage injection and an early injection is executed in the fuel injection into cylinders and ~~an intake control of the diesel engine for controlling~~ the torque control of the torque generation of the diesel engine by an intake control to reduce the torque variation during the transition from the normal control operation to the catalyst activation control operation, is executed.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously presented) The method of exhaust gas purification of claim 6,

wherein: said NO_x occlusion reduction type catalyst comprises a reducer occluding substance.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously presented) The method of exhaust gas purification of claim 6,

which comprises performing said rich-burn control operation to recirculate EGR gas to generate an exhaust gas which is in a fuel-rich state and to control the torque ~~generated by~~generation of the diesel engine by ~~controlling the~~an intake ~~air into the~~control of the diesel engine to reduce the torque variation during the transition from catalyst activation control operation to the rich-burn control operation or from the rich-burn control operation to the normal

control operation.

11. (cancelled)

12. (cancelled)